

Steve McDaniel, Director

- ✚ Riverfront Phase 2 has started construction this past month. Crews are on site with utilities and earth moving being the first part of the work that has commenced. Permitting applications with FEMA is also in the process of review.
- ✚ The first wave of staff training has completed the Lead Boldly section. This was done in the first quarter. Moving forward, there will be a new group of staff each quarter throughout the year going to this training.
- ✚ The recreation staff and I met with the Jennings Center Advisory Council to discuss programming for the rest of spring and what is being proposed for the summer. We meet about every other month.
- ✚ Chuck and I met with a group from the Friends of the Rivers to discuss a possible collaboration. The discussion was more of a brainstorming exercise. We will continue to work through the ideas before we hopefully land on something special.
- ✚ Rhonda and I met with the Hemsoth brothers who currently farm a little less than 30 acres of our land on North River Road. We will be bringing an updated agreement to the April park board meeting for consideration.
- ✚ Toward the middle of the month, I attended the Northern District IPRA meeting in Elkhart. This meeting covered several topics, and I also networked with other parks and recreation departments in the northern part of the state.
- ✚ The Conservatory staff invited me to their annual Volunteer Celebration dinner. We were able to celebrate with so many of the volunteers of the Conservatory and Greenhouse. Without their help, we would not be able to have the great flowers and programs. Thank you all for your time, expertise, and passion.
- ✚ Steve S. and I met with the developer at the apartment complex next to Griswold Park. They shared their renovation plans with us and asked us to look at the park space.
- ✚ I gave an update to the Park Foundation at their meeting towards the end of March. This kicks off their meetings that are scheduled for the year.
- ✚ I attended a meeting with 911, Homeland Security, Fort Wayne Trails, and others to discuss a new campaign that public safety will be launching called What3Words. This is an app that will pinpoint your location anywhere in the world down to a 10 foot square. This will help those needing assistance from public safety to locate them in remote locations like on our Rivergreenway, or other large parks.
- ✚ On Friday March 28th, the Zoo had their ribbon cutting ceremony for the season. This kicks off their 60th anniversary year.
- ✚ Renovations to several playgrounds have started. Waynedale's playground is complete with Jehl and Lakeside's under construction.
- ✚ The team is looking at our park signage throughout the system to see what it would take to make them multilingual. More to come in the future on this project.
- ✚ All three Golf Courses opened for the season on March 22nd. The weather is warming up and more activities are happening on the courses.

Chuck Reddinger – Deputy Director of Recreation

Salomon Farm Park, Neighborhood Outreach Community Centers (Youth/Downtown/McMillen Park), Riverfront, Athletics, Aquatics, Golf, Outdoor Recreation, Special Events, Headwaters Park, and Travel Service

✚ Golf

- Gary Whitacre and Jason Smith reported that the majority of the golf seasonal staff have been hired and trained.
- Gary Whitacre announced that the three city golf courses were officially opened on Saturday March 22, 2025. As usual, the spring weather has been a mix of sun, rain and temperature fluctuation. On a positive note, when the weather has been nice there have been a number of golfers playing.

- Jason Smith reported that a new Golf Course Superintendent has been hired. Chris Rudolph will officially start on Monday April 7, 2025. Jason Smith also stated that in the interim, Travis Whitman (Assistant Golf Course Superintendent) has done a great job making sure that the staff and courses were ready for opening.
- Travis Whitman reported that the Big Dig project is making its way up hole number six at Foster Golf Course. Hopefully progress will continue and restoration of the golf course can begin.

Pools

- Daryn Schwartz reported that he has gotten three quotes to replace the media in the two sand filters at Northside Pool. It's his intention to have the paperwork submitted and the project completed before the pool is to be filled for the season.
- Daryn Schwartz reported that his new part-time staff person (Jackson Fife) had started. Jackson will be assisting Daryn with athletic field and park space scheduling. Daryn also stated that Jackson has some pool experience which will be very helpful in getting them open for the season.

Franke Park Bike Trails

- Chuck Reddinger, Chad Shaw, Michael Sauer, Ed Adams and Jason Smith met on-site at Franke Park to discuss the potential building of the new trail. After walking the proposed area and discussing the plan, 3RVS was given the approval from the Parks and Recreation Department to proceed with the new build.
- Chad Shaw, Ed Adams and Jason Smith met on-site at Franke Park Derby Hill to discuss the restoration of a past trail that was improperly designed and implemented. Parks and Recreation gave 3RVS the go-ahead to restore the area. Also, it was discussed to restore "Thorny" trail back to its original design. 3RVS was asked to submit a detailed plan for the restoration and then a decision would be made.

Community Center

- Caleb did a Park's Podcast with Steve McDaniel talking over summer hiring and open positions.
- Caleb attended FWCS Transportation Job Fair at Wayne on 3/17 and Work One job fair at Ivy Tech on 3/20.
- Karen will be joining staff doing an information table and handing out literature about Parks & Rec programs at Culture Night at Memorial Park Middle School on March 25 and April 17 at Franke Park Elementary.
- Linda said that the instructor for Drums Alive class did a demonstration in between ABC and Cardio Flex on March 18 to help promote the spring class. We did have 3 people as of March 24 that signed up for Drums Alive class that participated in the demonstration.

Weisser Park Youth Center

- Youth at the Weisser Center engaged in hands-on STEM experiments designed to enhance their understanding of scientific concepts. During the Air Pressure Experiment, they used a stack of paper, a ruler, and a tennis ball to explore how air pressure works. In another activity, the Water Pressure Experiment, youth inserted pencils into water-filled baggies without spilling any water. They learned that the baggies are made of molecular chains that prevent water from leaking out, which sparked amazement and curiosity among the participants.
- The youth participated in various group games that promoted physical activity and teamwork. They learned and enjoyed playing Freedom Catch and Ultimate Frisbee, both of which encouraged movement, coordination, and fun interaction with peers.
- In the arts and crafts segment, youth created colorful tie dye art using coffee filters, markers, and water. They experimented with different tie dye folding techniques, which allowed them to produce unique and creative patterns while learning about color blending and artistic expression.
- *Erin's House for Grieving Children*: On February 26, youth listened to the book *I'll See You in the Moon*, which opened a conversation about loss and remembrance. On March 12, they completed a "My Favorite

Memories” worksheet, where they reflected on and wrote about silly, outdoor, happy, and holiday memories related to a loved one who has passed. Then, on March 19, the youth used a basketball tournament bracket to identify and write down short- and long-term goals. This activity helped them process their thoughts, feelings, and actions related to the loss of a loved one.

- *Allen County Public Library*: On March 12, staff from the Allen County Public Library facilitated a creative workshop in which the youth constructed straw chairs, inspired by the story *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. Using straws, cardboard, pre-cut shapes, and tape, the youth worked on building stable structures while engaging their imaginations.
- *Turner Chapel AME – Ubuntu Learning Lab*: On Thursday, March 13, in celebration of Women’s History Month, guest speaker Condra Ridley read the book *Genois Wilson, Firefighter: She Dared to be First* by Carol Butler. The youth learned about Genois Wilson’s achievement as the first woman firefighter in Fort Wayne—a milestone of great significance, particularly for African American women. Ms. Ridley also shared stories of other influential African American women, including Toni Morrison, Shirley Chisholm, Mae Jemison, and Hattie McDaniel, highlighting their groundbreaking contributions to society.

Jennings Youth Center

- The Jennings Youth Center had a vibrant and enriching month, full of fun, learning, and movement. Core programming is in full swing, with a focus on providing a safe, supportive environment where youth and the surrounding community can thrive. Life skills development was a central theme this month, as participants engaged in sessions on hygiene, personal finance, cooking, and emotional regulation.
- Youth enjoyed a variety of creative and educational STEAM activities, including soap making, slime creation, and painting in honor of Black History Month. These activities combined science, art, and hands-on learning in a way that encouraged both expression and experimentation.
- *Allen County Public Library*: Youth participated in a winter-themed craft project, creating snowflakes and proudly hanging them in their windows at home.
- *Erin’s House for Grieving Children*: This month featured a unique collaboration with Punch Films. During a special filming session, Supervisor Chanell Ridley was interviewed alongside participating families, capturing the impact of Erin’s House programming in action.
- DrumFun is underway and thriving. This engaging program explores identity and heritage through rhythm and storytelling. Mr. Ketu connects deeply with the youth, helping them recognize and celebrate their cultural strengths. Though he will be on tour for a few weeks, the impact of his sessions continues to resonate.
- *Top Tier Dance Program*: This month, there was a meaningful crossover between the dance program and Erin’s House, particularly involving Mr. Erik. This connection fostered a promising and collaborative relationship between the two programs, enhancing the youth experience through movement and mentorship.
- A major highlight of the month was **Black History Trivia Night**, which was a tremendous success. Weisser Youth Center claimed 1st and 3rd place, while McMillen Community Center secured 2nd place. All participants received Black History gift bags filled with stationery items. Winning teams were awarded T-shirts, tumblers, and trophies to recognize their achievement and participation.

McMillen Community Center

- March brought opportunities for both indoor and outdoor engagement at the McMillen Community Center. With the arrival of milder weather, the Tuesday Flag Football Program was able to head outside to the park. Youth thoroughly enjoyed playing on the grass, which added a sense of realism and excitement to the games.
- Parent’s Night Out, in partnership with Easterseals Arc, was held this month to support families of children with autism. For three hours on Saturday evenings, children were provided with fun and inclusive

care. Activities included playground time, an art project, and a relaxing movie night accompanied by pizza.

- The 11 and Up Group had a great time engaging in competitive group trivia. Staff created a customized online Jeopardy-style game featuring a mix of academic subjects such as math, science, and history, along with fun topics like sports and music.
- Esports continues to grow in popularity among older youth. This club provides a space for participants to compete in computer games with one another, promoting strategy, teamwork, and digital skills.
- The Little Ballers winter session is wrapping up at the end of March. This program serves 4- and 5-year-olds, teaching the fundamentals of basketball such as dribbling and shooting. It has been incredibly rewarding to witness their progress and enthusiasm. On the final day of class, each child will receive a medal to celebrate their participation and growth.

Riverfront Fort Wayne

- **Kickboxing with 9Round** and **Yoga on the Riverfront** continued to be popular monthly fitness offerings, drawing a combined total of 68 participants.
- The **Annual Spring Celebration**, held on March 22 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Promenade Park, welcomed guests for an afternoon of multicultural spring traditions, educational activities, and entertainment.
 - Highlights included a **wildlife presentation by Indiana Wild**, a **Plant Walk** featuring 20 donated plants from Lawton Greenhouse, the Plant Center, and other local partners, and **craft stations** representing spring traditions from Thailand, the Middle East, Germany, and Bulgaria.
 - The event also featured informational booths hosted by local organizations, including **Sheathed**, **Save Maumee**, the **Indiana Local Food Network**, and others, offering attendees valuable insights into environmental and community initiatives.

Salomon Farm Park

- Camp counselor applications continue to be accepted, with a steady flow of interest from college students.
- Interviews for prospective camp counselors began in March and will continue into April as needed to fill all positions.
- Planning for summer camp activities is underway, with returning staff assisting in reviewing schedules and supply needs.
- Camp registration officially opened to the public on Monday, March 24, 2025, and early response has been strong.

Lindenwood Nature Preserve

- Paris Stream Dau was selected and officially hired as the new naturalist. Paris is an Indiana Master Naturalist and holds a Bachelor's of Science Sociology.
- Preparations for spring programming and school field trips are ongoing, with staffing and material planning now moving forward.

Franke Park Day Camp

- Camp registration opened on Monday, March 24, 2025.
- Interviews for camp counselor positions were held throughout March, with several strong candidates identified.
- The application period for camp counselor positions remains open, with efforts ongoing to recruit additional qualified staff.
- Hannah Freimuth has been hired into the Assistant Camp Supervisor, joining Chris Freehill in assisting Vivi Clark the Camp Supervisor. Hannah has been a camp counselor for several years and this will be her first year as an assistant.

Rhonda Berg – Deputy Director of Finance & Theatre

Budgets, Payroll and Commercial Vouchers, Trust Fund Donations, Foellinger Theatre, Registrations, Rentals, Tickets, Customer Service, Accounts Payable and Receivable.

Payroll and Accounts Payable

- The Parks and Recreation Department paid 259 employees (139 full-time and 120 regular part-time and seasonal) for the payroll ending March 22nd, and paid on March 28th, 2025.
- We currently have the following permanent full-time positions open, posted, interviewing or in the process of being hired, as of March 31st, 2025:
 - Heavy Equipment Operator (Fund 121)
 - Manager VI – Grounds (Fund 121)
 - Program Coordinator – Neighborhood Programs – Jennings (Fund 121)
 - Program Coordinator – Neighborhood Programs – McMillen (Fund 121)
 - Grounds Equipment Operator (Fund 121)
 - Administrative Assistant – Registration (Fund 121)
 - Gardener – Botanical Conservatory (Fund 121)
 - Superintendent – Golf Greens (Fund 439)
 - Supervisor – Salomon Farm (Fund 439)
 - Fleet Mechanic – Golf (Fund 439)
 - Security Person (Fund 451)
 - Park Person C – Riverfront (Fund 451)
- Seasonal hiring is going well. We have most of the golf course staff hired in and working.
- Next upcoming seasonal hiring events will be for incoming Theatre staff and incoming Aquatic and Camp staff.
- Payroll on the new Attendance on Demand/Time Management System has been going smoothly.
- We are getting ready to ensure the remaining seasonal rented time clocks and iPads will be ordered and installed.
- 1 position was removed from our headcount: Manager VI – Neighborhood Programs as of 3/17, which will change our General Fund Headcount to 132 Authorized down from 133.
- In March we processed 28 purchase requisitions, numerous change orders, 485 p-card statements, two payroll periods and 865 invoices.

Customer Service

- Training has begun for Joyce Dodane our new office manager. She has taken off running and already formed good relationships with her staff and co-workers
- Joyce Enterline began the process of tracking ground travel revenues and expenses which is required in order to reconcile payments for the Travel Specialist, Mona Will
- Interviewed for a new administrative assistant-registration position for the front office
- Rick Kinney, Theatre manager, resigned. Posted position for a new Theatre manager
- Met with the Hemsoth brothers to negotiate a new contract for rental of farmland at Kreager Park. The previous contract expired in 2024. Per acre rental price will rise from \$125/acre to \$150/acre. Hemsoth brothers have rented this land since 2019 at the \$125/acre price.
- Rhonda completed the Mayor's Lead Boldly management training program
- Attended quarterly Park Foundation meeting
- Our first RecTrac Learning Café was held. This is a monthly opportunity for staff that use the RecTrac software to meet with Kim, our RecTrac Lead, and ask questions or brainstorm new ways to use the software
- Front office staff continue to be busy verifying veterinary records and selling dog park memberships.
- Registration for summer camps began March 24th.

- Pavilion customers are busy trying to secure locations for graduations and summer family events.

Foellinger Theatre Report Programming

- **Concerts Announced and On Sale:**
 - FW Philharmonic - Dolly Parton's Threads - May 17, 2025
 - Justin Moore – June 5, 2025
 - Tommy James and The Shondells – June 28, 2025
 - Trace Adkins – August 22, 2025
 - Warrant, Lita Ford and Firehouse - September 26, 2025
- **Confirmed Shows - NOT ANNOUNCED - TO BE ANNOUNCE APRIL 14 AT 10:00AM**
The 1964 Tribute – Friday August 1st, 2025
- **Newly Confirmed Community Event's To Be Announced Soon**
 - Fort Wayne Area Community Band – Tuesday June 10, 2025
 - Fort Wayne Area Community Band – Tuesday July 8, 2025
 - New Millennium Jazz Orchestra – Wednesday July __, 2025
 - Fort Wayne Children's Choir Choral Fest Concert – Friday July 25, 2025
 - Fort Wayne Area Community Band – Tuesday August 12, 2025

Working with Promoter Partners and City Employees to create final draft Co Pro proposal for April Board Approval

Marketing, PR and Patron Services

- Working with internal marketing staff and external marketing partners to implement Foellinger Theatre venue focused marketing campaign. This is to increase the visibility of the venue to our region and will begin in early 2025 (Parks Marketing Staff)
- Engaging fans in offseason through active social media presence (Parks Marketing Staff)
- Working with Mayor's team and Parks Marketing on updates to new Foellinger Theatre website – to be launched in early 2025

General Management

- Working with promoters and renters to communicate financial information regarding individual show revenue, ticket sales, security details, patron issues, areas of needed improvement and ways to grow revenue in 2025
- Reviewing 2024 revenue and expense statements
- Preparing pro forma revenue breakdowns for in house promoted shows and co-pros
- Creating Purchase Orders for theatre payments and purchasing
- Reviewing License Agreement language and authoring co-pro agreement language for review by the city attorney

Facility Management/Capital Improvement Projects

- RE: 2025 Foellinger Theatre Lighting Upgrade Equipment Purchase - Received all equipment from Port Lighting with the exception of Hazer's (fog machines) and Grand MA 3 Lighting console. They are on back order. Installation of equipment to begin on April 22 and be completed by May 1
- Prepared staging and test area for chain motor inspection and testing in March

HR and Human Resources

- Reviewed and updated all theatre staff position job descriptions, wage sheets and any new HR protocol
- Sent out email inviting former seasonal employees back for 2025 season
- Have been managing hiring matrix with updates for potential employee status in the hiring process with 14 applicants confirmed as of today

Steve Schuhmacher – Deputy Director of Park Maintenance, **Facilities, Technicians, Grounds/Heavy Equipment, MainTrac, Projects, Storeroom, Administration, Safety Compliance**

Facilities Supervisor: Greg Reith

- Pavilion rental totals for the month of March was 103.
- Annual cleanings were completed at: Foster Park golf clubhouse, McMillen Park golf clubhouse, and Shoaff Park golf clubhouse.
- The Facilities staff pressure washed the following locations: Shoaff Park playground, Franke Park, and McMillen Park.
- Graffiti was removed from the following locations: Buckner Park, Eastside Playlot, Foster Park, Klug Park, Lawton Park Skate Park, Lions Park, Martin Luther King, Jr Bridge, McCormick Park, Psi Ote Park, Weisser Park, and West Central Playlot.

Maintenance Technician Supervisor: Mike Cremeans

- The maintenance techs completed work on the kitchen area of the McMillen Park pavilion. This re-opened the former kitchen area of the west side of the pavilion with upgraded amenities.
- The process of restoring seasonal water service to park facilities and drinking fountains has begun and will continue over the next month.
- Work continues at the Salomon Farm Park summer kitchen, chicken coop, and learning center for the upcoming season.
- Preparation for the upcoming butterfly showcase at the Botanical Conservatory has wrapped up. Improvements to the tent vestibules and butterfly lab were completed.
- The on-call staff received a total of **21** calls this month, **6** of which were lock issues, **7** were calls from dispatch regarding alarms, and **8** were miscellaneous issues.

Grounds Maintenance/Heavy Equipment: Rob Schenkel

- The Heavy Equipment staff transported several pieces of equipment to McMillen Park and Shoaff Park for the golf maintenance staff.
- They also loaded and transported the train to the Fort Wayne Zoo.
- Grounds crews spent time pruning and cleaning up tree limbs and other debris at various park locations.
- Winter service on equipment continues at both Lawton Park and Kreager Park maintenance shops.
- Rugby, soccer, and softball fields were rolled, aerated, and fertilized at Tillman Park, Foster West Park, Kreager Park, McMillen Park, Lawton Park, Memorial Park, and Shoaff Park.
- Both crews started to remove salting equipment from the trucks, in anticipation of the upcoming mowing season.
- Heavy Equipment along with the Grounds Relief crews removed and excavated Jehl Park and Lakeside Park playgrounds to make way for installation of new playground.

Superintendent: Mike Gore

- Approve and record invoices for various materials used and applied in grounds, maintenance, and facilities departments.
- Overseeing a variety of issues on all sides of Maintenance.
- Going back over inspections of the Parks and doing new ones.
- Starting on 2025 playground inspections still.
- Gearing up for the 2025 River Greenway inspections.
- Gearing up for 2025 monthly MMR reports for IDEM at the spray parks.
- Writing and overseeing 2025 purchase orders.

- Completed the “lead Boldly” training through the City of Fort Wayne.
- Working on interviews for open positions in multiple departments.

Operations / Fleet Maintenance / Storeroom: Travis Roth

- **Storeroom and Property:**
 - Storeroom staff cleaned out and organized the fork lift garage bay and started moving Toro specific items into an upstairs storage room that will be designated for Toro parts.
 - A new, energy efficient window was installed in the storeroom.
 - Saw chains for chainsaws were prepped and made up to supply the small engine shop for the summer.
- **Garage Operations Highlights:**
 - 136 work orders were scheduled this month, 16 of which were services.
 - Work continued this month on the winter service of golf course mowers, landscape equipment, and the rebuilding of Toro 7210 and 580 mower decks.
 - Mowers were transported from the Lawton garage to the golf courses as they prepare to start their mowing season. Final details are wrapping up on the last couple of mowers.
 - The engine from chipper 322 was taken to C&P machine to have the block rebuilt. The turbos and radiators are finished and final assembly will commence once the engine block is assembled by the machine shop.
 - Repairs to the Botanical Conservatory butterfly exhibit were finished and the structures were transported to the Rea building for storage.
 - The zoo train was placed back on the tracks and it passed all of the state inspections and is ready for use.
 - A custom fire place log holder was fabricated for the outdoor fireplace at the new Franke Pavilion.
 - IDEM inspected to Lawton Park underground fuel storage tanks. The inspection went perfectly and there were no violations cited. Gasoline Equipment will continue as our compliance inspection contractor for the next 3 years.

Project Administration: Dave Weadock

- Botanical Conservatory South Linkway Roof Replacement – Awaiting bid process.
- Brewer Park Construction – Pavilion structure and partial roofing installed. Trail base material installed throughout park. Interior restroom building work and playground installation beginning early April. Turf playground material scheduled for late April. Spray-ground piping is installed.
- Community Center Parking Lot Control Gate – Purchase order acquisition in progress.
- Community Center Shuffleboard Courts Shade Structures – Product on order through manufacturer.
- Franke Park Playground Equipment – Purchase order issued. Work planned for April 2025.
- Franke Park Zoo Aquarium Roof Replacement – Purchase order acquisition in progress.
- Headwaters Park Fountain – Construction in progress.
- Headwaters Park Service Buildings Roofing – Planning in progress. Construction will likely occur in fall 2025.
- Hurshtown Reservoir – Dock system fabrication in progress. Installation in late April or early May.
- Jehl Park Playground Equipment – Purchase order issued. Project start date, early April.
- Johnny Appleseed Park Fishing Piers Stabilization – Engineering design in progress. Construction planned for April 2025.
- Kreager Park Soccer Fields Irrigation – Construction in progress. Completion by mid-April.
- Lakeside Park Playground Equipment – Purchase order issued. Construction planned for April 2025.
- Lawton Park Trestle Bridge – Construction in progress.
- McCormick Park Playground Equipment – Purchase order issued. Construction planned for June 2025.
- Mechanic St. Bridge Construction – Wood deck installation in progress. Railing installation planned thereafter.
- Packard Park Redevelopment – Construction in progress.
- Waynedale Park Playground Equipment – Project completed.

Safety: Tony DeVido

- The Parks & Rec. Safety Committee met on Mar 25. 2 employees and 2 guests were present.
- 1 vehicle crash was reported for this time period.
- 2 employee injury was reported this time period.
- 2 CPR/FA classes were held. 14 employees were certified
- General Safety training was completed for 49 Golf seasonals.
- The practical exercise portion of the annual *Forklift Safety* class was held. All employees who attended passed.
- OSHA 10 Hr. class dates are set. April 23 & 24.
- Worker Protection Standard classes are being scheduled.
- CPR/FA supplies were inventoried and necessary items purchased in preparation for seasonal employee training.

Chad Shaw, Deputy Director of the **Planning & Development, Forestry, Greenhouse, Landscape & Horticulture, and Riparian**

Botanical Conservatory Report – March 2025

- ‘Floor is Lava’ continued inviting enthusiastic patrons into a playful, nostalgia-filled setting that reimagines the childhood thrill of leaping from couch to armchair—elevated within a breathtaking tropical display. Guests can continue enjoying Floor is Lava through April 6.
- The Botanical Conservatory hosted several well-received events in March 2025 including the Great Train Connection (March 14-16), and Volunteer Appreciation Dinner (March 17). Staff are gearing up for Color in Motion: Live Butterfly Exhibit (opening April 15), Bunny Tales in the Garden (April 18 & 19), Color in Motion: Spring Artisan Market (April 27), Mother’s Day Plant Sale (May 8 – 11), Mother’s Day in the Garden (May 10 & 11), and several pre-registered programs and workshops throughout the month.
- Current vacancies include one full-time Park Person C (accepting applications), and two Camp ACTiVenture Counselors (candidates have been selected and are awaiting clearance by Human Resources). A new full-time Gardener, Harrison Smith, began working in his role; he comes to the Botanical Conservatory with a background in Public Horticulture. Harrison graduated with a degree in Horticulture from Purdue University and has work experience in several public gardens, including Newfields, Denver Botanic, Mt. Cuba Center, and Chanticleer. Two Seasonal Gardeners, Slate Egolf and Liz Masson, began working in their roles. One Seasonal Maintenance, Bethany Patty, returned to the Botanical Conservatory after previously serving in 2020.

Botanical Conservatory KPIs

- March 2025 was another strong month for public engagement at the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, with 11,630 visitors enjoying our programs and exhibits—a 1.86% increase over March 2024. Year-to-date, attendance is up 20.19%, reflecting sustained interest in immersive experiences like The Floor is Lava and signature events such as The Great Train Connection.
- While total revenue for the month was lower compared to March 2024, this difference is primarily due to the timing of the Fort Wayne Park Foundation’s annual endowment disbursement, which was reflected in March figures last year and will be received later in 2025. This expected support continues to play a vital role in

funding the Conservatory's operations and growth.

- Membership revenue was also lower this March, due to anticipated MAP membership receivables that will be reflected in April figures. Despite this, year-to-date membership revenue remains on solid footing, and we anticipate continued growth as we move into spring.
- Other revenue streams performed well across the board. Conservatory Shop revenue increased by 6.81% in March and is up 13.53% year-to-date, a reflection of thoughtful product curation and excellent guest service. Rental and catering revenue, while showing a slight decrease for the month, remains 14.36% higher year-to-date than in 2024, indicating strong and growing interest in the Conservatory as a venue for private events. Admissions revenue declined by 10.95% in March; however, the year-to-date total remains strong with a 12.01% increase, pointing to consistent public interest and engagement with our exhibits and programs.
- In summary, March was a productive and positive month, marked by consistent visitor interest and a healthy foundation for continued growth. As we look ahead to the launch of Color in Motion and other spring programming, we remain confident in our momentum and appreciative of the ongoing support from our partners and community.

Attendance

March 2024: 11,418 visitors

March 2025: 11,630 visitors

An increase of 212 or +1.86% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Attendance: 24,046 visitors

2025 Attendance: 28,901 visitors

An increase of 4,855 or +20.19% to 2024

Admissions Revenue

March 2024: \$48,244.00

March 2025: \$42,959.00

A decrease of \$5,285.00 or -10.95% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Admissions Revenue: \$96,506.00

2025 Admissions Revenue: \$108,100.00

An increase of \$11,594 or +12.01% to 2024

Membership Revenue

March 2024: \$11,032.00

March 2025: \$8,519.00

A decrease of \$2,513.00 or -22.78% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Membership Revenue: \$32,438.00

2025 Membership Revenue: \$30,582.00

A decrease of \$1,856.00 or -5.72% to 2024

Conservatory Shop Revenue

March 2024: \$24,707.23

March 2025: \$26,390.22

An increase of \$1,682.99 or +6.81% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Gift Shop Revenue: \$71,189.43

2025 Gift Shop Revenue: \$80,824.65

An increase of \$9,632.22 or +13.53% to 2024

Rental & Catering Fee Revenue

March 2024: \$7,145.00

March 2025: \$6,985.00

A decrease of \$160.00 or -2.24% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Rental Revenue: \$24,952.50

2025 Rental Revenue: \$28,535.00

An increase of \$3,582.50 or +14.36% to 2024

Other Revenue (includes Activity Enrollments, Donations, Plant Sale, etc.)

March 2024: \$222,903.01

March 2025: \$37,280.05

YTD Comparisons

2024 Other Revenue: \$222,903.01

2025 Other Revenue: \$48,837.64

Conservatory Total Revenue

March 2024: \$311,275.85

March 2025: \$122,133.27

A decrease of \$189,142.58 or -60.76% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Total Revenue: \$447,988.94


2025 Total Revenue: \$296,879.29

A decrease of \$151,109.29 or -33.73% to 2024

Botanical Conservatory Business Development

- Staff submitted a grant to the Benjamin H. Smyser Foundation for support of the Desert House Improvements Project.
- Staff submitted a grant to the Hayner Foundation for support of the Desert House Improvements Project.

- Staff submitted the required Letter of Inquiry (LOI) to General Motors Charitable Giving for support of the Desert House Improvements Project. If approved, we will receive a full application to submit for the project.
- Staff submitted a grant to the Summit Legacy Foundation for support of the Desert House Improvements Project.
- Staff is continuing to research possible capital plan funders from foundations and corporations.
- Staff submitted survey information to the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and fundraising information to the Better Business Bureau. These submissions will foster our association with IMLS and verification for the Botanical Conservatory as a trustworthy charity for potential donors via the BBB.
- Staff provided promotional tickets and information to Majic 95.1 and FOX55 for the promotional spots for the 2025 Bunny Tales in the Garden.
- Staff provided promotional tickets and information to 97.3 WMEE and 21Alive for the promotional spots for the 2025 Color in Motion Butterfly Exhibit.
- Staff provided promotional tickets and information to Majic 95.1 and FOX55 for the promotional spots for the 2025 Mother's Day Plant Sale.
- Staff finalized promotional agreements with Majic 95.1 and PBS Fort Wayne for the 2025-2026 Fern's Fairylight Express Exhibit. Also finalized agreements with Majic 95.1 for the rest of the 2025 events and exhibits.

 **Botanical Conservatory Public Programs – Events** - Great Train Connection (March 14-16) This year's 3-day event welcomed a total of 2,218 visitors, just under the 2,538 visitors in 2024. A total of 505 came Friday, 979 on Saturday, and 734 on Sunday. There continues to be 7 different train vendors who return and participate with approximately 40 different individuals contributing over the 3 days. The Botanical Conservatory's contribution of a G-scale Garden Display looked better than ever and was admired by many. The youngest of the admirers in attendance received 664 railroad-inspired goody bags and crafted 529 craft bracelets. When sharing their enthusiasm for the event, both the vendors and guests make it the success that it is!

Education

- T'ai Chi PM (March 4-April 1)
This particular series did not meet the minimum registration requirement to conduct the program. The next series, Ta'i Chi AM from April 22-May 20 has already reached maximum enrollment.
- Bonsai Club Private Workshop (March 29)
Members of the Fort Wayne Bonsai Club held a member-exclusive workshop to repot bonsai and continue the practice of this art form that has its roots in 700 AD China. While those in attendance enjoyed the comradery, more experienced members aided those newer to the art form. The club was also kind enough to allow curious Conservatory guests the opportunity to peek in and observe.

SCFVA, School Children's Flower & Vegetable Association

- Education staff continue to stay in contact with area schools while tracking information for 2025 program participation. Out of the 67 schools in contact, a total of 53 schools committed to receiving free plants and hosting their own local plant show for students to participate come late summer/early fall. This is made possible with the 15,051 free plants that are being coordinated for April delivery by Landscape and Horticulture Staff. In addition, 2,305 free trees have been requested in partnership with Parks Forestry Operations and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources as a special opportunity for 3rd graders. Each school principle from the 53 participating schools also receives a free plant to participate alongside their students.
- All other ordered items such as ribbons, seed packets, pencils, and t-shirts have been coordinated for pickup at the Botanical Conservatory from April 1-27. Out of the 53 different schools participating, 39 schools ordered these items separate from receiving free plants. A total of 2,303 seed packets were prepared as additional participation categories. New this year, over 15,000 handled bags are being prepared as a response to ongoing concerns for the plants making it home safely; included is a plant care sheet, information on SCFVA history, and admission passes to the Botanical Conservatory. Staff have also begun to recruit volunteer judges in preparation for school plant shows as the next big thing!

Youth Field Trips

The Botanical Conservatory hosted 414 students from 12 groups in March 2025. There were 12 groups totaling 668 students in 2024.

Exhibits & Displays

- The Floor is Lava (January 11-April 6)
The new year's first showcase exhibit is one for the books, as it is the HOTTEST garden around. Conservatory guests of all ages find themselves in awe of unique elements such as a creatively assembled volcano that is surrounded by vibrant coleus and a variety of other meaningful plants. Plant interpretation is included along with an imaginative scavenger hunt and fun, colorful obstacles nearby. This winter play exhibit even features volcanic smog and a mud pit, which wouldn't be complete without realistic sound effects and adventurous background music. Watch your step, and don't fall in... The Floor is Lava!
- Lisa Heintzman: Innovative Abstractor (January 11-April 5)
Abstract artwork by artist, Lisa Heintzman is on display in the Gallery Hallway where it is being enjoyed by guests coming and going at the Botanical Conservatory. The medium is primarily epoxy and alcohol ink with some sea-themed objects included. The displayed work is available for sale at shop.botanicalconservatory.org. Her public artist reception was held on Sunday, February 9th.

Volunteers/Staff

- Volunteer Appreciation Dinner (March 17)
A total of 190 volunteers, 59 being new, contributed service hours to the Botanical Conservatory and Lawton Park Greenhouse in 2024. In all, 10,520 hours were served with 55 volunteers contributing 50 or more hours; the most served by a single volunteer was 957 hours! These volunteers were all invited to attend the Botanical Conservatory's annual celebration dinner in acknowledgment of their active service in the prior year. While staff took advantage of the opportunity to shower volunteers with gratitude, volunteers similarly returned the praise. Together, 119 volunteers, volunteer guests, and staff enjoyed dinner, drinks, comments, conversation, and a raffle at the beautiful Promenade Park Pavilion. Volunteers also had the opportunity to order and receive complimentary volunteer apparel.
- Volunteers logged 412 hours in March, which is the equivalent of 2.3 full-time staff. At the Front Desk, 31

shifts were covered by 6 volunteers, and in the Gift Shop, 38 shifts were covered by 10 volunteers. These Front Desk and Gift Shop volunteers also helped prepare items for the recently inherited SCFVA program. Overtime, approximately 35 different volunteers assisted with preparing bags, pencils, and ribbons. In addition, fourteen volunteers packaged seed, including 3 couples who volunteered together. An additional volunteer assisted with Gift Shop inventory while a go-to garden volunteer continued weekly grooming of the Atrium and Tropical House. Seven different volunteers started out the month volunteering for the last two days of the Home & Garden Show.

- Three new volunteers received orientation in which two of them jumped right in to assist with an event while the third joined in at the greenhouse. Eleven volunteers assisted during the Great Train Connection event when offering goody bags and a craft opportunity; an additional volunteer assembled and operated the G-scale model train. Heading into April, staff are working hard to recruit Butterfly Attendants; the schedule is 79% full with 40 volunteers scheduled on 364 shifts. Independent of the core Conservatory volunteers, Easterseals and CAS continued volunteer service into March. CAS increased to a regular group of 4 students with an accompanying instructor.
- In partnership with Fort Wayne Sister Cities, a social media post was promoted to help decorate eggs and contribute toward a “Bunte Eier” German-style display for the upcoming Bunny Tales in the Garden event. Five different groups responded while several Conservatory volunteers are also helping to prep eggs for display. Also new this year, Conservatory staff have teamed up with graphic design students at the Anthis Career Academy who are printing and collaborating on a window design for participation in this year’s Fort Wayne in Bloom window decorating contest. Installation is scheduled the week of April 14th while online voting begins April 17th at www.downtownfortwayne.com

Upcoming

January 11-April 5: Innovative Abstractor, art display by Lisa Heintzman

January 11-April 6: The Floor is Lava, winter play exhibit

April 11-June 22: Painted Lady Butterfly Kits for sale in Gift Shop, while supplies last

April 15-June 22: Color in Motion, live butterfly exhibit

April 15-June 22: Gentle Turning, art display by Grace Yencer

April 3: Psanky: Ukranian Eggs, pre-registered

April 6: Three Rivers Orchid Society Meeting

April 6-14: Showchange Week!

April 15: Opening Day of “Color in Motion”

April 15 & 16: Volunteer Goody Bag Assembly

April 18 & 19: Bunny Tales in the Garden, public event

April 22-May 22: Tai Chi AM, pre-registered

April 24: 4H Club Meeting

April 27: Color in Motion: Spring Artisan Market, public event

May 3: Bonsai for Beginners, pre-registered

May 4: Three Rivers Orchid Society Meeting

May 5-8: Setup & Load-in Plant Sale, 9 am-4 pm

May 8: Day 1- Mother's Day Plant Sale, Member's Preview 4-7 pm

May 9: Day 2- Mother's Day Plant Sale, 1-7 pm

May 9-16: National Public Gardens Week, public hours

May 10 & 11: Mother's Day in the Garden, public hours

May 10: Day 3- Mother's Day Plant Sale, 10 am-4 pm

May 11: Day 4- Mother's Day Plant Sale, 11 am-2 pm

May 17: Spring Bonsai Show, public hours

May 23: Outdoor Sales Garden Opens, public hours

May 25: Iris Flower Show, 12-3 pm

May 29: String Jams Spring Jam, 6:30-7:30 pm

Botanical Conservatory Landscape and Horticulture

- March marked a busy and productive month for the Conservatory's landscape and horticulture efforts as we transitioned into spring. Pride Landcare, in coordination with our dedicated gardening crew, completed extensive outdoor mulching and spring cleanup, refreshing the grounds and preparing our exterior spaces for the growing season ahead.
- Inside, all three shifts of spring bulbs—tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths—have been successfully installed in the Showcase Garden. These change-outs ensure that the garden remains vibrant and colorful throughout the season. Following each deinstallation, bulbs are added to our slightly used bulb sale, where they are made available to the public at \$1.95 per pot, supporting our sustainability efforts and extending the life of our plant material beyond display.
- Additionally, Sycamore Tree Care provided professional pest treatments and structural pruning on key landscape specimens, helping to maintain the health and form of our tree canopy. J&A Ford Tree Care also contributed to our integrated pest management efforts through systemic pest treatments, targeting issues proactively and supporting the long-term vitality of our collections.

Botanical Conservatory Facility and Maintenance

- The installation of the new elevator by American Elevator is nearing completion, with construction expected to wrap during the first week of April, followed by a final inspection. Botanical Conservatory staff continue to coordinate closely with the contractor to ensure a smooth and successful finish to the project.
- Throughout March, staff worked diligently to maintain exhibit props for The Floor is Lava, ensuring the showcase remained immersive and engaging for guests. The team also provided facility support for multiple rental events, contributing to a high-quality visitor and client experience.
- Botanical Conservatory Staff collaborated to transport, set up, and return materials for the 2025 Home & Garden Show, demonstrating excellent teamwork and coordination. Preparations are also well underway for the upcoming spring show change, with efforts focused on assembling and organizing materials for the butterfly tent and display installation.
- The Conservatory team also proudly presented and participated in the 2025 Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, celebrating the invaluable contributions of our volunteers. Additionally, staff successfully assembled, presented, and stored all components of the Great Train Connection, wrapping up another popular and well-received event.
- Progress on the Café and Conservatory Shop renovation projects continued steadily throughout March, with several key milestones completed. B Squared Construction began framing the counters and installed new slat walls to support future merchandise displays. At the same time, Allied Mechanical completed the installation of new feed vents and return ducts in the ceilings of both the café and gift shop areas, improving airflow and efficiency. Ruiz Painting carried out necessary drywall repairs and began repainting across multiple surfaces, freshening up the interior. LuxeGuard completed the application of epoxy flake coating in the café prep area as well as the back janitorial space, providing a clean and durable surface. Additionally, David Brandenburger Construction finalized the installation of a new ceiling grid and tiles, and mounted FRP board along the café and janitorial area walls, enhancing both appearance and sanitation standards. These combined efforts are moving the renovation closer to completion, setting the stage for an improved visitor experience.



*G-Scale Garden Display as part of
the Great Train Connection event*



*Member of the Fort Wayne
Bonsai Club repotting a bonsai*



*Colorful features as part of the
"Floor is Lava" winter play exhibit*



*Tulips brightening up the Showcase
Garden in the first shift change of spring*



*Volunteers enjoying their annual Appreciation
Event and Celebration Dinner at the Promenade*



Event volunteers assisting younger attendees with a craft and goody bag during the Great Train



Volunteers happily preparing seed packets for SCFVA program



Volunteers with Easterseals Northeast Indiana preparing bags for SCFVA plant



Greenhouse volunteers transplanting for the Mother's



Anthis Career Academy Students assisting with outdoor cleanup at the corner of Douglas &



Anthris Career Academy Students installing a design for the Fort Wayne in Bloom window



Planning Report – March 2025

- Construction of the Franke Park Renaissance, Phase I project is nearly complete. There are a few punch list items remaining to finish at the pavilion and landscaping replacements to be completed in the spring.
- Construction at Packard Park and Brewer Park continues with installation of utilities and preparation for site concrete at both. The roof is being installed on the pavilion at Brewer Park.
- The Lawton Park/Fourth Street Pedestrian Bridge is in place and the approaches have been poured. Site restoration should be completed this spring.
- Earthwork has started for Riverfront Phase II B as Hagerman ramps up construction. Staff is attending regular progress meetings with the construction team and is coordinating with AEP.
- Design work continues on the Foster Park Entrance project. The design team is working to incorporate changes to the southern entrance drive option based on comments received. Schematic design should be wrapped up in mid-April. Staff is also coordinating with City Utilities on the restoration of their utility construction project throughout Foster Park.
- The Treeline District design team has finalized schematic design plans for the proposed park. Parks staff is working with Redevelopment staff and the design team to ensure the project aligns with the department's goals and that it is integrated with the adjacent Riverfront designs.
- Staff has drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with City Utilities for the installation of off-site Floodway Riparian Mitigation for impacts at Franke Park during construction of the Franke Park Renaissance, Phase I project. City Utilities is installing multiple other areas of riparian mitigation at the former Lakeside Golf Course and has agreed to include this mitigation in a construction package with the others. The MOU will be presented for Park Board approval in the upcoming months.
- Staff is working through design for proposed improvements at Wells Street Park.
- Staff continues to review revisions to the design of interpretive signage at Wells Street Park and Well's Street Bridge. The Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association is using neighborhood grant funds to purchase the signs and is working with Parks staff to determine locations for installation.
- Staff is working on a planting plan for the Salomon Farm Park north/dining garden to be installed this spring.
- Staff attended the Southeast Open House to share projects that have been completed in the area over the past five years, upcoming projects, and current programming. Attendees shared programs various elements in the parks that they would like to see incorporated in the future.
- Staff has drafted a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Botanical Conservatory Exploration Garden and Terrace Garden design. The draft is undergoing internal review. The redesign of these spaces will not only bring opportunity for new uses but also improve the visitor's experience, universal accessibility, maintenance operations, and sustainability.
- Staff continues to meet regularly with Conservatory management to discuss various agreements, staff

training, marketing, showcase, and facility operations. We continue to explore and implement ways to improve the physical facility and visitor experience

Horticulture and Landscape Report- March 2025

- There were 30,609 seeds sown for Parks, Mother's Day Plant Sale, and Conservatory Showcase.
- A total of 910 cuttings were taken for Parks, Plant Sale, and Showcase., and approximately 9,000 plants were transplanted for Parks and Plant Sale. 800 Geraniums were transplanted for the Mother's Day in the Garden event.
- 2,300 Spring Bulbs are ready for Showcase, and 3,601 plants were raised for Summer 1 Showcase.
- Approximately 6,000 plants were transplanted for SCFVA.
- 49 Greenhouse volunteers worked approximately 567 hours in the greenhouse helping to transplant, clean plants, price and label.
- The Lakeside Park team focused on daily litter pickup, and leaf removal. Work began on the roses, making their first application of Horticulture Oil to prevent fungus such as Black Spot and Powdery Mildew. Edging began in the rose beds, and they started pruning rose cane. The team also daylight pruned the Yews/Barberries/Boxwood, and made pre-emergent weed applications.
- The Foster Park team focused on daily litter pickup, leaf removal, perennial garden cleanup and mulching, stump removal, shrub pruning, tree pruning, and applying deer repellent to all bulb beds. They also cleaned up the golf course rental and cleaned up and mulched the golf clubhouse before the course opened on March 22nd. The Foster team labeled all bulb beds this year with the species of bulbs that are growing in them as a way to educate park patrons who may be interested in learning more.
- The Downtown team continued to pick litter daily at Freimann. They removed all greens from the Downtown Community Center pots, pruned shrubs at Promenade, applied pre-emergent to specific problem areas at Headwaters, and also began pruning the Euonymus on the East side of Headwaters. All liriopie was mown for the first time in Headwaters this year. Liriopie beds at Freimann were mown as well. The Downtown team spent a lot of the month completing landscape bed cleanups ahead of our mulching landscape contractors. Cleanups were done at the Courthouse Green, the Downtown Community Center, Freimann, Meyers, Promenade, and Riverfront IIA.
- The City team cleaned up and mulched all beds around the Shoaff golf clubhouse and the McMillen golf clubhouse before the courses opened on March 22nd. They also applied pre-emergent to specific weed problem areas in the parks. They spent the majority of the month doing landscape bed cleanups ahead of our mulching landscape contractors. Bed cleanups were done at Franke Pond Pavilion, Franke Pavilion 1, McKinnie Commons, Salomon, Shoaff River Lodge, McMillen Community Center, Weisser Center, Jennings Center, PSI OTE Upper/Lower, Indian Village Sears Pavilion, Kreager-Taylors Dream, McMillen Pool, Foellinger Theatre, Nuckols Park, Northside Pool, McMillen Family Pavilion at Franke, and Irishtown Plaza.
- Some poor weather has resulted in greenhouse work (transplanting, seeding, etc.) being completed by landscape staff. Landscape staff also helped the greenhouse stay on schedule with seeding as needed.
- Per contract, MJK Total Lawn Care did a spring leaf cleanup of all turf and landscape beds in Headwaters Park. Leaves have been removed in anticipation of April mulch installation and the beginning of mowing season.
- Pride Landcare completed all contracted spring landscape maintenance that included bed edging, mulching, and pre-emergent applications in March. Parks completed were Franke-Pavilion 1, Franke-Pond Pavilion, Salomon, Northside-PSI OTE Upper and Lower Pavilions, Shoaff-Riverlodge Pavilion, Indian Village-Sears Pavilion, Jennings Center, Powell Park, McMillen Community Center, Weisser Center, and McKinnie Commons.
- Visionscapes completed all contracted spring landscape maintenance that included partial bed cleanups, bed edging, mulching, and pre-emergent applications. Parks completed in March were Downtown Community

Center, McMillen Pool, Northside Pool, Nuckols Park, Freimann Square, Courthouse Green, Main Street Medians, Meyers, Kreager-Taylor's Dream, and the Foellinger Theatre.

- Lawnganics began their organic turf fertilization and weed control contract. Applications to the turf were made at Promenade, Headwaters, Foster, Lakeside, Courthouse Green, Freimann, Community Center, Foellinger Theatre, Main Street Medians, McMillen Pool, Northside Pool, and Meyers Park.
- Myers Plant Health Care will be treating several select trees at Promenade, Lakeside, Freimann, and Foster for insects, fungi, and improved tree health.
- Mow Baby Mow's mowing contract was renewed at Promenade and Riverfront IIA for the season.
- Pfister Sprinkler Systems was awarded a PO to do emergency repairs to all irrigation systems. This work will be done as needed this season in Headwaters, Promenade, Freimann, Community Center, Main Street Medians, Courthouse Green, Meyers, Northside Park, Foellinger Theatre, McKinnie Commons, Riverfront IIA, Swinney Letter Bed, Lakeside, and Foster.
- Bryce Newcomer began work as the new Riverfront Gardener. Bryce's focus will be Riverfront IIA, Riverfront IIB, as well as other parks along the river. He will also assist the downtown gardening staff with all downtown park maintenance as a member of their team.
- Ashley Mitchell, Sarah Allen, and Sarah Colter received their Ornamental Pest Management License by completing the Category 3A Ornamental Pesticide Examination in March.
- Alexis Glover received her Registered Technician License by completing the RT Pesticide Examination in March.



Riparian Management Report- March 2025

- Hired both full-time position (Maintenance Technician – Riparian) and seasonal position.
- Completed renovation and made the move to the new workspace.
- Scouted several parks for geese activity for seasonal goose egg addling.
- Updated several safety issues on the service boat including the damaged deck and side storage lockers.
- Cleared Guldlin and Promenade Park from silt.
- Updated safety devices on throw rings and lines at Promenade.
- Completed seasonal buoy permits for Idle Speed Zones.
- Completed seasonal geese permits for yearly relocation contract.
- Began construction of rigid dock booms for upcoming season.



Forestry Report- March 2025

- The City of Fort Wayne has approximately 40,000 vacant street tree planting sites and funding to plant about 1000 trees annually. For this reason, we are not able to plant trees based on request alone. Residents wishing to fill one or more vacant sites adjacent to their homes can apply through the Citizen Match Tree Planting Program. Applications can be found on the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation website. The deadline to apply is July 1st.
- Collaborated with Engage Fort Wayne to improve awareness about the Citizen Match Tree Planting Program. The page includes links to a 2023 podcast with Director, Steve McDaniel, as well as some additional information about why the City should invest in trees.
- Continued coordination to make free River birch seedling trees available to area 3rd graders. This opportunity is made possible through partnerships with the School Children Flower and Vegetable Association, Indiana Department and Natural Resources, and the Homestead High School Environmental Science Club. In total, we expect to deliver more than 2,300 seedlings.
- Forestry staff partnered with the City of Fort Wayne Human Resources Department to complete DISC

Assessments. This tool is expected to improve communication and teamwork at all levels within the forestry division.

- We will be celebrating Arbor Day at Kettler Park on Friday, April 25th this year. Arbor Day is an amazing opportunity to appreciate and celebrate the incredible importance of trees. Whether you're a die-hard tree lover or just starting to appreciate their beauty and importance, we would love for you to join us.
- In March, Forestry crews completed 81 out-of-cycle tree maintenance requests. Examples of these requests include tree limb elevation to facilitate buses, removal of limbs touching homes, clearing street lighting and signage, and removal of dead limbs.
- In-house crews removed 34 trees in March. 18 of these were located within the parks..
- Crews responded to and cleared 53 storm-related broken/fallen/hanging limbs, 6 of which were private trees that fell into the street.
- Completed 4 tree damage appraisals for trees that had been struck by vehicles. These appraisals resulted in \$2,700.00 in damages to City-owned trees.
- Responded to and closed 49, 311 Call Center requests for service this month.

Kathryn Pargmann – Manager Lead of Marketing

- + www.RiverfrontFW.org had 3,450 hits to the site this month and the Promenade Park link had 5,488 hits. The Rental link continues to be a popular source of information. A total of 2,509 hits in March.
- + The Marketing Team finalized the Annual Report. The Annual Report Summary will be available very soon.
- + The Marketing Team continues to push out job messaging and attend Job Fairs and related events. Over 5,600 hits to the Parks Job link in March!
- + **Web Statistics:** Users: 44,765 Hits: 149,272
- + 59 Design projects completed including many spring/summer brochures.
- + Hursttown Reservoir signage ordered, delivered, and ready to install.
- + Submitted grant application for Lifetime Sports Academy.
- + Began working on fundraising information booklets for major projects.
- + Confirmed media sponsors for Summer Fun Times, including new sponsors WMEE and K105 for Summer Pool Season and HOT 107.9 for the Electronic Riverfront event.
- + Started Youth Scholarship promotion plan for Camps and Summer Programs.
- + Social media promotions for: job recruitment, travel, golf opening and updates, day camp & PODS registration among others.
- + Arranged for 10 media interviews with select staff.



| | |
|---|---------|
| March Media Mentions: 64. And Social Media Totals for <u>March:</u> | |
| FB Followers | 100,479 |
| FB Reach | 807,379 |
| X (formerly Twitter) Followers | 13,964 |
| Instagram Followers | 27,949 |

Gary Whitacre – Manager, Golf Operations

All three of the golf courses opened for the year on Saturday, March 22. That start is about a week later than usual, and as with all spring outdoor activities, weather played a huge role in it. To date, we have had less than a week's worth of "decent" weather days. Conditions have only allowed us to run carts on a handful of days, and the ranges were only available for two days.

Weather is always the biggest factor driving rounds and revenue, and this is especially amplified in the spring. That being said, the brief glimpses of good weather showed that golf will continue to be strong, and also helped us identify and correct a potential problem. The first day carts were allowed out, two of the courses reached a point during the day when all of the carts were rented. We also discovered that there were batteries failing on some carts, and were able to identify and correct this problem.

There are 3 major brands of batteries that we use in the carts, and one of them has now been identified as having a shorter lifespan of dependability. Fortunately, the cost of batteries has leveled off somewhat, and the price difference for the "better" batteries is not so great as to exclude them, considering their longer service time.

What the early results tend to show is that excitement is still high for golf, and the excitement for the new season is justified. April so far has not been good for weather, but that to will change.

One bit of concern is Foster Park. It performed surprisingly well revenue-wise last year considering all of the disruption from the Deep Rock Tunnel project, but the (very) early indications from this year are showing a drop in activity. As the project comes to a close (hopefully by mid-summer), it will be imperative to get the damage done restored and the course functioning as normal.

As we swing into mid-April, high school and middle school golf is starting back up. Once again, there are a total of seven area schools that utilize the Parks courses. League play will re-start towards the end of April, and interest in leagues continues to grow.

The golf shops are already well-stocked, with the emphasis continuing to be on staple, high-turnover merchandise like balls and tees. New additions such as clothing are being slowly introduced and expanded upon. Hard goods (clubs, bags) are not being stocked at this time.

All of the shops are making sure staffing levels are adequate. Once again, we had a very strong pool of applicants to choose from, and there is a good mix of new and returning staff.

As the weather improves and activity level increases we will be working towards a great season!

Dawn Ritchie – Greenway & Trails Manager



FW PUBLIC WORKS
**Greenways
& Trails**
In Your Neighborhood

- ✚ The pedestrian bridge was delivered on 4/2 for the Wheelock Road Trail. Construction will begin in early April.
- ✚ The Hanna Street Trail from Wallace to Berry will be bid in April.
- ✚ The Pufferbelly Trail between Washington Center and Ice Way construction has resumed. In the next three months, the contractor plans to complete the trail excavation, storm utility work, concrete prep work, concrete foundation work, and the trail along Washington Center Road. The contractor hopes to begin paving in June.
- ✚ We'll attend the International Trails Summit in Madison, WI from April 15-17.
- ✚ The Maumee Pathway was closed on 4/2 due to flooding. The trail is often closed on and off throughout the spring as we have spring rain and flooding.
- ✚ *Trek the Trails* and *Tread the Trails* kick-off on April 29th.
- ✚ We will have our annual spring meeting with our volunteer Greenway Rangers on April 9th. We have 107 Rangers who check the trails weekly and help with some minor maintenance on the trails.
- ✚ Fort Wayne Trails will be presenting a check of \$157,000 to the Mayor on 4/24 for the final phase of the Hanna Street Trail.
- ✚ Dawn will be attending the Greenways Foundation of Indiana's annual Trail Celebration Luncheon in Indianapolis on 4/25.
- ✚ National Celebrate Trails Day is 4/26.

Division News and Media Coverage:



- ✚ [pr0325_ezine.pdf](#) - March 2025 NPRA issue
- ✚ [April 2025 - Parks & Recreation \[1 – Cover + follow the arrows on the right\]](#)
- ✚ [FWm City Guide 2025 | FortWayne.com](#)

WPTA, Mayor shares hopes for North River property

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/04/09/tucker-shares-hopes-north-river-property/>

Adams Radio Group, City's Great American Cleanup plans

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2025/04/08/87004/>

Adams Radio Group, Historic NE Neighborhoods offering free trees

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2025/04/08/historic-northeast-neighborhoods-offer-free-trees-to-residents/>

Adams Radio Group, Artists sought for Harvester Neighborhood project

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2025/04/07/86959/>

WANE, City Council members worried about potential SB 1 cuts

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/larger-than-the-entire-parks-department-councilmembers-worried-about-sb-1-cuts/>

WPTA, City Council votes down car wash plan

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/new-car-wash-voted-down-by-fort-wayne-city-council/>

WANE, Proposed state budget cuts could impact trails

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/trail-systems-in-jeopardy-after-state-budget-cuts-next-level-trail-program/>

Adams Radio Group, City releases neighborhood 101 guides and videos

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2025/04/05/city-releases-new-neighborhood-101-guides-and-videos/>

WANE, Who should lead the North River development; public and private sectors are split

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/who-should-lead-north-river-development-public-private-sectors-split/>

WANE, Deep Rock Tunnel protecting homes and rivers

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-waynes-deep-rock-tunnel-protects-homes-and-rivers-proving-its-worth/>

WANE, City's upcoming road widening projects; will it help traffic

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-wayne-plans-3-road-widening-projects-will-it-actually-help-traffic/>

WFFT, North River update

https://www.wfft.com/news/north-river-property-continues-to-attract-investors/article_ea29d3bd-7a0d-4446-a096-7c0c4861fa54.html

WPTA, Walk in the Park feature – Community Center event

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/04/03/walk-park-childrens-book-swap-sale-community-center/>

WANE, Mayor Tucker signs Sexual Assault Awareness Month proclamation

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/mayor-tucker-signs-sexual-assault-awareness-month-proclamation/>

WANE, Businesses can apply for free bike racks through the city program

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/fort-wayne-businesses-can-apply-for-free-bike-racks-through-city-program/>

WANE, How 911 call center handles surge of calls amid storms

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/how-allen-county-911-center-handles-surge-of-calls-amid-storms/>

WANE, Mayor Henry's remembrance ceremony is today

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/mayor-tom-henry-passed-away-one-year-ago-this-friday-heres-how-the-public-can-take-part-in-his-remembrance/>

Adams Radio Group, Southeast Strategy Open House recap

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2025/03/28/86716/>

WANE, Ten Point Coalition returns

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-wayne-united-ten-point-coalition-makes-their-return-with-first-walk-back/>

City TV, 'Public Works in your Neighborhood' program with Shan Gunawardena and Jonathan Leist as guests

<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=3zUrHx8bxU0BrbRG>

WANE, New bus shelter in Harvester Neighborhood

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/harvester-neighborhood-celebrates-new-bus-shelter/>

WBCL, City announces \$41.4M infrastructure plan for 2025

<https://www.wbcl.org/news/fort-wayne-announces-41.4-million-in-neighborhood-improvements-in-2025>

WBCL, National recognition for Fort Wayne on the growth of Black-owned businesses

<https://www.wbcl.org/news/report-ranks-fort-wayne-no.-5-nationally-for-black-owned-business-growth>

FW Bus Weekly, City statement on Fort Wayne Next

https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_a87f721b-3fa3-4b67-a24b-1abde3316d8d.html

WANE, No indication that federal cuts will impact North River site cleanup

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/no-indication-federal-cuts-will-impact-north-river-site-cleanup/>

WANE, Fort Wayne/Allen County to revamp 911 service

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/fort-wayne-allen-county-to-revamp-911-service/>

WFFT, Study shows impact of proposed North River Fieldhouse; City looking to increase sports tourism

https://www.wfft.com/news/study-shows-impact-of-proposed-north-river-fieldhouse-city-looking-to-increase-sports-tourism/article_02ac2f34-18c7-4e1d-867b-71c12f49ec67.html

WANE, Feature on Connected Neighborhoods initiative

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/connected-neighborhood-initiative-extends-1m-to-catalyze-revitalization/>

WFFT, Oxford Street improvements as part of the city's southeast strategy

https://www.wfft.com/news/southeast-fort-wayne-neighborhood-to-be-redeveloped/article_73a69536-0113-11f0-95d2-1f6db6911dce.html

WANE, Plans for 6-Mile Creek Trail

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/trail-to-new-haven-may-finally-have-an-end-date/>

WFFT, Growth in Allen County reflected in recent Census data

https://www.wfft.com/news/u-s-census-data-reflects-population-growth-in-allen-county/article_6d325d20-0064-11f0-b8c2-13608d69b26d.html

City TV, On the Move program with Councilwoman Chambers interviewing Chief Lahey and Chief Caudill
<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=MulPCEgRmcUrwnmB>

Adams Radio Group, City golf courses to open
<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2025/03/14/city-golf-courses-to-open-march-22/>

PBS, Indiana Lawmakers program with energy as the featured topic
<https://www.wfyi.org/programs/indiana-lawmakers/television/energy>



Storytime on the Farm
at Salomon Farm Park

Presented by
Allen County Public Library
10:30 am April 11 and April 25
Sign up at acpl.libnet.info/event/12213628 and [12213629](https://acpl.libnet.info/event/12213629)

Stay after for a wagon ride around the farm (\$5, under age 2, free)

Ages 2-6 FREE



PLAY THE PARKS
-FOSTER -SHOAF -McMILLEN
Courses now open for the season!

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| April 1 | 9:00 a.m. |
| April 5 | 8:30 a.m. |
| April 12 | 8:00 a.m. |
| April 19 | 7:30 a.m. |
| April 26 | 7:00 a.m. |

Follow us at:
Fort Wayne Parks Golf



FORT WAYNE
PARKS AND
RECREATION



COLOR IN MOTION

**22nd Annual
Live Butterfly Exhibit**
April 15 – June 22

Live butterflies have landed at the Conservatory bringing with them an array of natural beauty and wonder. Watch in awe, their wings in flight, as they flash with color pigments and refracted light. Observe exotic butterflies emerging from their chrysalides right before your eyes! An epic display of multicolored flowers and foliage elevates this annual spring exhibit. Sponsored by the Fort Wayne Park Foundation, English Bonter Mitchell Foundation, "In memory of Jo Ann and William Wyatt," 97.3 WMEE and 21Alive.

97.3 WMEE
Today's Best Variety

21
ALIVE



**Bunny
Tales
in the
Garden**

**April
18 & 19
10am-3pm**

[click for Day Camp brochure](#)

Slightly Used Bulb Sale

March 26 – May 4, public hours

Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

This annual sale features slightly used tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths from the Botanical Conservatory's winter exhibit. Located in the outdoor Sales Garden, bulbs are \$1.95/pot and are ready to plant in preparation for next year's bloom! Purchases are made through the Conservatory Shop while supplies last. Admission is not required to shop.



 FORT WAYNE
PARKS AND
RECREATION

HELLO SUMMER

Save your spot today. Register for DAY CAMPS and PODS!

CHOOSE YOUR Adventure
Summer 2025 Day Camps
Franklin Park Day Camp • Camp Adventure • Family Fun Day Camp
Kids for Nature Zoo Camp
These activities are not sponsored, offered or endorsed by FWPR.

Summer Activity PODS
Ages 5-13 • 7 Weeks of Fun • 16 Different Themes
Morning and afternoon sessions that can be paired for full day fun!
Registration begins March 24!
fortwayneparks.org
These activities are not sponsored, offered or endorsed by FWPR.

fortwayneparks.org

Brochures are also available by calling 427-6000.

★ **Scholarships Available** ★
See either brochure for complete details.

[click for PODS brochure](#)



SCHOLARSHIPS

available for qualified youth
up to 17 years of age!

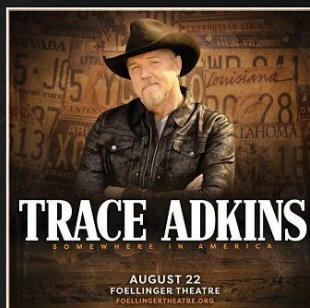
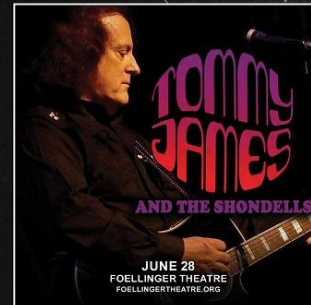
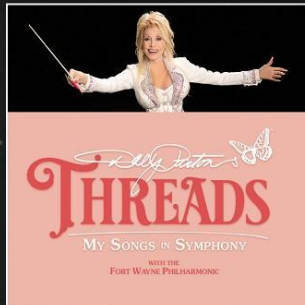
One scholarship (max \$75)
per calendar year

 FORT WAYNE
PARKS AND
RECREATION

fortwayneparks.org

These shows and more . . . coming soon to

Foellinger Theatre



Tickets on sale now!

Through Ticketmaster at
Foellingertheatre.org
or Ticketmaster.com

In person at Fort Wayne
Parks & Recreation Dept.
705 E. State Blvd.
(no additional fees)

Foellingertheatre.org

 FORT WAYNE
PARKS AND
RECREATION
Foellinger Theatre

PLAY the PARKS

Opening mid-March
Follow us on social media or call the golf course.

| Foster Park Golf Course | Shoaff Park Golf Course & Driving Range | McMillen Park Golf Complex |
|---|---|---|
| Historic 18-Hole Championship Course New Golf Carts New Golf Paths | Challenging 18-Hole Course, All Par 3 City's Premier Driving Range Great for beginners, families and skilled golfers who want to play a quick round! | 18-Hole Executive Course • Mad Anthony's Short Course Driving Range • Jerry Fox Learning Center Putting Green • Short Game Practice Area • Foot Golf Lifetime Sports Academy |
| Rudisill Blvd. & Old Mill Rd. (260) 427-6735 | 6401 St. Joe Rd. (260) 427-6745 | Oxford at Hessen Cassel (260) 427-6710 |

MORE GOLF for LESS GREEN
Play 9 Holes on weekdays for just \$7!

fortwayneparks.org
@FortWayneParks Golf

Senior Men's Golf League Organizational Meeting
April 16, 9 am, Franke Park Pavilion #1
or call Jim at 260-479-7770.